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Medical Officer's Annual Report for the year 1944.

The Minister of Health has directed that the Report for 1944 shall again be abbreviated and confined to essential matters and exceptional measures. He desires it to include information on the steps taken to combat infestation and on the state of water supplies. Statistics are to be preserved but not included in this interim report.

The health of the population was good and no unusual epidemic occurred during the year.

Immunisation against diphtheria proceeds satisfactorily. On Dec 31st,1944 it was estimated that 73% of the child population aged 5 to 15 were immunised and 60% of those aged under 5. One case of diphtheria occurred in a child aged 3 who had not been immunised.

Infestation Of the verminous conditions scabies was still unduly common. Pediculosis capitis though frequent was not abnormally prevalent.

The town has been fortunate in having the Rural District Council's old Isolation Hospital close by to act as a cleansing station, in addition to the Minor Ailment Clinic established at the First Aid Post. Both the hospital and the First Aid Post will be closed down at or soon after the end of 1944. The County Council has arranged to carry on the Clinic for a time in another form, but the hospital will be a serious loss. Neighbouring Districts have been worse off in this respect than Blandford. In my opinion a Central Cleansing Station, with some inpatient accommodation, is urgently required to serve the group of Districts at this end of the County which at present have no means of applying the power and duties given them by those sections of the Public Health Act 1936 which deal with Verminous conditions, and by the Scabies Order 1941.

Water Supply The whole town has a piped supply from the Blandford Waterworks Co., which is excellent both in quality and quantity. A deep chalk well gives a pure water at the source and regular chlorination affords additional security.

Though every house in the town has water within easy reach a large proportion of them depend on external standpipes.

12 samples from the water going ~~out~~ into supply were bacteriologically analysed and 4 chemically. All gave highly satisfactory results

(Signed) L. B. SCOTT. M.D. D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health. April,1945.